



MAS 104

Australian Media

MQC2 Day 2014

Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	2
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	3
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	5
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	5
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	8
<u>Graduate Capabilities</u>	11

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Lecturer

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Contact via greg.levine@mqc.edu.au

n/a

Please email for appointment.

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit offers an introduction to the media in Australia. The unit is structured around five modules with each focusing on a different media sector – press, cinema, radio, television and advertising. In the first three weeks, students are introduced to the general mediascape of Australia and shown some tools for analysing media. Following the general introduction, the readings and lectures in each module provide students with an overview of a specific media industry in Australia. They then go on to focus on one or more significant aspect of media content relevant to that industry and its cultures. Finally, each module examines at least one contemporary issue of importance to that industry. This unit explores questions such as: What is media and why should we study it? How is nationhood problematised through the media? What is the function of the press? Who are the Australian male and female as constructed by Australian magazines? Does Australia need its own cinema? How important is an Australian film industry? What makes talkback influential? How important is television in knowing who we are? Why should comedy be taken seriously?

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Demonstrate a heightened capacity for independent research of text-based and audio-

visual media

Exhibit improved subject-specific presentation skills and lead a subject-specific discussion

Demonstrate sharpened academic writing skills

Synthesize the studied material

Demonstrate enhanced understanding of how media contribute to a sense of Australian culture and how they have done so historically

Demonstrate an improved ability to be an active and critical consumer of Australian media content

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
Participation	20%	Ongoing
Quizzes	30%	Ongoing
Essay Plan	20%	Friday 29 August
Major Essay	30%	Friday 3 October

Participation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

Students are expected to make an active and informed contribution to the tutorial discussions. Tutors will look for evidence of engagement with the weekly readings, so aim to contribute in ways that reflect your reading of the set material. Attendance alone will not count towards your Participation grade.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Exhibit improved subject-specific presentation skills and lead a subject-specific discussion
- Synthesize the studied material
- Demonstrate enhanced understanding of how media contribute to a sense of Australian culture and how they have done so historically
- Demonstrate an improved ability to be an active and critical consumer of Australian media content

Quizzes

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **30%**

There will be 3 tutorial quizzes during the semester, based on the discussion questions designated for each week's readings. The scheduling of these quizzes will be at each tutor's discretion. As such, students are advised to prepare for each week's questions, in the event of a tutorial quiz. Each quiz will be during a weekly tutorial, will take 15 minutes, and is worth 10%. Students that are absent for a tutorial in which a quiz has been administered will forfeit the marks for that quiz, unless a medical certificate can be provided to account for the absence, or there are exceptional circumstances brought to the tutor's attention before a weekly tutorial. In these events, alternative arrangements will be made.

NB: At least one of the 3 quizzes will take place before Week 5.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate sharpened academic writing skills
- Synthesize the studied material

Essay Plan

Due: **Friday 29 August**

Weighting: **20%**

(1) An annotated resource list which covers the material (of part thereof) that will be used for the essay (books, media texts, reports, articles, chapters, websites etc). Each listing should provide full bibliographical details, as well as a brief description of how it will be useful for the major essay. Each description should be approximately 100 words. There should be no less than 6 listings, and no more than 10.

AND

(2) An essay outline which presents the main argument of the essay, as well as the main points that will be discussed. This is to be approximately 250 words long and may be presented through either bullet-points or a paragraph.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate a heightened capacity for independent research of text-based and audio-visual media
- Demonstrate sharpened academic writing skills
- Synthesize the studied material

Major Essay

Due: **Friday 3 October**

Weighting: **30%**

Students will submit a 2000-word essay based on the course content. There will be several essay questions to choose from. These questions, as well as additional information about essays, will be in the Assessments folder on iLearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate a heightened capacity for independent research of text-based and audio-visual media
- Demonstrate sharpened academic writing skills
- Synthesize the studied material
- Demonstrate enhanced understanding of how media contribute to a sense of Australian culture and how they have done so historically
- Demonstrate an improved ability to be an active and critical consumer of Australian media content

Delivery and Resources

DELIVERY

MAS104 AUSTRALIAN MEDIA consists of a weekly 1-hour lecture and a weekly 1-hour tutorial. While the lectures are recorded through the ECHO system, students are encouraged to attend every lecture - these are lively, sometimes interactive sessions. Students are required to attend every tutorial. Students that miss more than two tutorials, without evidence of sickness or unavoidable disruption, will have to defend their continuation in the unit. Besides attending lectures and tutorials, and completing required readings, MAS104 also requires students follow the unit on iLearn, and stay informed of special Announcements and additional information posted there.

It is the student's responsibility to record their tutor's email address ASAP. ALL questions and concerns about MAS104 should be, in the first instance, emailed to the tutor. Generally, student emails will be replied to within 48 business hours.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND/OR MATERIALS

The compulsory readings for this course can be found in the MAS104 Unit Reader. This is available from the university's Co-op Bookshop. Students must read the weekly readings BEFORE each week's tutorial.

Unit Schedule

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR WEEKLY READINGS ARE IN THE UNIT READER AND ARE LISTED IN iLearn, WEEK BY WEEK. THE WEEKLY 'DISCUSSION QUESTIONS' - WHICH

DOUBLE AS (POTENTIAL) QUIZ QUESTIONS - ARE ALSO LISTED IN iLEARN.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION

This week we'll provide an overview of the central themes and concepts of MAS104, and briefly discuss the various assessment tasks. Please note that tutorials for MAS104 begin in week **one**. Use this first week to look through your unit guide thoroughly and ask your tutor if you would like anything clarified. If you haven't yet done so, remember to purchase your course reader from the Co-Op bookshop. As you go through the unit guide, take note of the course's various emphases and consider what has been included. Why do you think we will study these issues more closely?

WEEK 2: MEDIA, REPRESENTATION & ANALYSIS

Different disciplines require different analytical approaches. This week we look at the issue of representation in the media. We'll also present some of the tools of media analysis and explore what types of things media students need to consider for their analyses of media texts.

WEEK 3: MEDIA & THE NATION

The rise of capitalism and the printing press were integral to the notion of 'imagined communities' and the formation of nation states. This week we look at how the world in general is 'mediated' by language and media. We'll also examine the role the media plays in constructing, perpetuating and/or contesting the idea of Australian nationhood.

WEEK 4: NEWSPAPERS, DEMOCRACY & THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Print is the oldest form of media in Australia and was fundamental in helping Australians forge a sense of nationhood. As important as they've been to our political culture though, and despite their historic links to democratic processes, traditional newspapers must now try harder to retain the popularity and importance they enjoyed in the 19th and 20th centuries. Competition from new media has challenged newspapers to adapt or die: this week, we consider this challenge. We'll also consider how, despite the scale and severity of the challenge, the press continues to underpin and animate national conversations - about Canberra, the world, and ourselves.

WEEK 5: MAGAZINES & GENDER

While often dismissed as trivial or exploitative, magazines are nonetheless immensely popular in Australia. This week we consider the historical development of some of Australia's most popular titles, and survey how they have helped shape important discourses - especially to do with gender. Our aim is to see how magazines function (or fail) as glossy 'how-to' guides for

contemporary Australian culture.

WEEK 6: RADIO - POWER & PRIVILEGE

Radio was once the unrivalled broadcast medium in the average Australian home, and the prime source of news and entertainment. With the arrival of television, radio's 'golden days' were over – but radio remained an influential presence in popular culture and political debate. This week we consider how radio continues to not only survive but also affect public opinion about prominent issues.

WEEK 7: AUSTRALIAN TV - MILESTONES & CHALLENGES

Since 1956 free-to-air TV has provided so many of the myths and motifs that contribute to our national culture. This week we consider the various milestone moments in Australia's television history - the programs, personalities and policy decisions that have shaped this country's television culture. Our aim is to see how Australian TV has distinguished itself in the global marketplace, despite the dominance of US television.

WEEK 8: TV COMEDY - STEREOTYPES, SATIRE & PARODY

Humour is a unique insight into identity - fears, aspirations and anxieties, individual and collective. Australian humour is often described as self-deprecating and laconic: do you agree? This week we consider how comedy is often delivered on Australian TV: through parody and satire. By examining more closely shows like *Summer Heights High*, we consider the uniqueness and cultural significance of local humour.

WEEK 9: AUSTRALIAN CINEMA - CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Since the birth of Australian cinema in 1896 the industry has been characterised by periods of boom and bust. This week we will present you with a brief history of the industry and put various policies within context. We will thus consider the economic, political and cultural factors that have shaped and challenged the Australian film industry, and survey some of the key issues facing the industry today.

WEEK 10: ADVERTISING AUSTRALIA - OCKERS, SHRIMPS & BIKINIS

This week we consider a part of Australia's mediascape that is, despite its pervasiveness and frequency, often either ignored or under-estimated: advertising. We briefly consider how Australia and Australianness have been 'sold', and canvass the implications for its 'imagined community'.

WEEK 11: AUSTRALIAN PR - GROWTH INDUSTRY?

This week we consider the tense relationship between Public Relations and the wider media landscape. As the number and influence of PR personnel in Australia grows, key questions arise: how does PR affect and/or undermine journalism? How are key events and institutions (such as Australia Day) driven by PR? As this industry swells in size and salience, we assess how PR affects both popular culture and the political mood.

WEEK 12: SOCIAL MEDIA - CONVERSATIONAL & INTERACTIVE

Social media has radically multiplied and diversified how 'ordinary' citizens contribute to the mediasphere. This has challenged traditional hierarchies and conventions, as online debates and discussions are initiated and sustained outside the control of venerable institutions. This week we consider how this has implications for media authority, the public sphere, democracy and the law – and survey the likely consequences for our 'imagined community'.

WEEK 13: UNIT REVIEW

This week we reflect on lessons and insights gleaned from MAS104.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

UNIT REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

You will be expected to evaluate critical responses to media issues and to apply critical perspectives to additional empirical material. You will be identifying and evaluating major arguments, based on course material as well as wider reading, in order to develop coherent, concise and well-supported arguments.

Extensions and special consideration

An ability to meet deadlines is an important aspect of media courses. Extensions will only be considered by the tutor if: they are requested BEFORE the due date; and they're accompanied by evidence of either illness or misadventure/misfortune. Otherwise, late assignments will be penalised by 5% per day (including weekends). Please don't refer to your professional/work commitments: it's your responsibility to factor in your university workload and manage your time accordingly. However, we do appreciate that your university time might be disrupted or destabilised for various serious reasons. If this is the case, and you find yourself overwhelmed to the extent that you are struggling to meet an essay deadline (or even come to class) PLEASE speak to your tutor. You will be either referred to the appropriate student services on campus, or you can negotiate a mutually agreeable arrangement.

Assignment submission

The Essay Plan and Major Essay for this unit must be submitted electronically, to the Assessments folder in iLearn. Clearly marked Turnitin links will be open for these assessments closer to the due dates. Tutorial quizzes take place in class and answer sheets will be provided for these.

Special Consideration Policy

Please see http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/special_consideration/policy.html

Students applying for Special Consideration must submit an on-line application with the Faculty of Arts. For an application to be valid, it must include a completed Application for Special Consideration form and all supporting documentation. The on-line Special Consideration application is found at: http://www.arts.mq.edu.au/current_students/undergraduate/admin_central/special_consideration.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON GRADING

See the University Grading Policy <http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

The grade a student receives will signify their overall performance in meeting the learning outcomes of a unit of study. Grades will not be awarded by reference to the achievement of other students nor allocated to fit a predetermined distribution. In determining a grade, due weight will be given to the learning outcomes and level of a unit (ie 100, 200, 300, 800 etc). Graded units will use the following grades:

HD High Distinction 85-100

D Distinction 75-84

Cr Credit 65-74

P Pass 50-64

F Fail 0-49

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic honesty is an integral part of the core values and principles contained in the Macquarie University Ethics Statement (<http://www.mq.edu.au/ethics/ethic-statement-final.html>). Its fundamental principle is that all staff and students act with integrity in the creation, development, application and use of ideas and information. This means that:

- All academic work claimed as original is the work of the author making the claim.
- All academic collaborations are acknowledged.
- Academic work is not falsified in any way
- When the ideas of others are used, these ideas are acknowledged appropriately.

The link below has more details about the policy, procedure and schedule of penalties that will apply to breaches of the Academic Honesty policy.

Academic Honesty Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate a heightened capacity for independent research of text-based and audio-visual media
- Exhibit improved subject-specific presentation skills and lead a subject-specific discussion
- Demonstrate sharpened academic writing skills
- Synthesize the studied material

Assessment tasks

- Quizzes
- Essay Plan
- Major Essay

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate a heightened capacity for independent research of text-based and audio-visual media
- Exhibit improved subject-specific presentation skills and lead a subject-specific discussion
- Demonstrate sharpened academic writing skills

- Synthesize the studied material
- Demonstrate enhanced understanding of how media contribute to a sense of Australian culture and how they have done so historically
- Demonstrate an improved ability to be an active and critical consumer of Australian media content

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Major Essay

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate a heightened capacity for independent research of text-based and audio-visual media
- Demonstrate an improved ability to be an active and critical consumer of Australian media content

Assessment tasks

- Essay Plan
- Major Essay

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Exhibit improved subject-specific presentation skills and lead a subject-specific discussion
- Demonstrate sharpened academic writing skills

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Major Essay